DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314

28 February 1983

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF:

DAEN-CWP-G

SUBJECT: Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System, Louisiana

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

1. I submit for transmission to Congress my report on the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System. It is accompanied by the reports of the Mississippi River Commission and the reporting officer. These reports were developed in partial response to resolutions from the Committee on Public Works of the U.S. Senate dated 11 June 1968 and 23 March 1972 and to a resolution from the Committee on Public Works of the U. S. House of Representatives dated 14 June 1972.

2. The Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System report developed by the reporting officer contains recommendations for both authorized and unauthorized features. The authorized features are recommended in two feature groups: (1) those features that have already been approved by the Chief of Engineers and for which design and construction may continue; and (2) those features which require approval by the Chief of Engineers. I concur with the recommendation of the Mississippi River Commission regarding these features as follows:

a. The following features of the Atchafalaya Basin project are authorized, have been approved, and will continue to be implemented by the New Orleans District Commander:

(1) Continued operation of the Old River control complex and the new auxiliary structure to maintain an average annual latitude flow division at Old River, Louisiana, of 70 percent Mississippi River/30 percent Atchafalaya River;

(2) Modifications of existing features where required, to pass the project flood, including raising to grade the East and West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levees and the levees west of Berwick; construction of service roads on levee crowns: modifying Bayou Sorrel, Bayou Boeuf, and Berwick locks; modifying the Charenton and East Calumet floodgates: modifying the Wax Lake East and Wax Lake West drainage structures; modifying culverts in the East and West Bayou Sale levees; and modifying the Upper Pointe Coupee, Centerville, Ellerslie, Franklin and Franklin Enlargement,

Exhibit 1

E-012-

Gordy, Maryland, North Bend, Wax Lake East, Wax Lake West, Bayou Yokely and Bayou Yokely Enlargement, Morgan City, and Tiger Island pumping plants; and such other miscellaneous modifications as deemed appropriate; and

(3) Continued construction of bank stabilization measures, as required, along the Atchafalaya River main channel above river mile 55.0.

b. I have approved the following features of the Atchafalaya Basin project for implementation under existing authorization:

(1) Enlargement of the main channel by construction of training works along the Atchafalaya River to a height sufficient to confine average annual peak flows, from river mile 116.0 to mile 90.0, and maintenance of existing channel banks from river mile 90.0 to mile 53.0 on the east side and mile 55.0 on the west side;

(2) Realinement of the four principal distributaries of the Atchafalaya River main channel; the Old Atchafalaya River, the East Freshwater Distribution Channel, the West Access Channel, and the East Access Channel to provide the optimum channel entrance angles for sediment control;

(3) Construction of a rock weir and connecting levees above the head of Grand Lake to control the present distribution of low to normal floodway outlet flows to approximately 30 percent through the Wax Lake Outlet and 70 percent through the Lower Atchafalaya River. For flows exceeding a 10-year frequency event, the low-level levees above Wax Lake Outlet would be overtopped. Operation of the outlet system will be monitored, and provided that the area's ecosystem responds favorably, then flow into Wax Lake Outlet may be further restricted by modification of the rock weir to limit low to normal flows entering the outlet to approach 20 percent;

(4) Enlargement of Wax Lake Outlet overbank by setting back the existing west Wax Lake Outlet Levee an average of about 3 miles and degrading the old levee to natural ground level and construction of a new West Calumet floodgate;

(5) Enlargement of the outlet channels by construction of training work below Morgan City on both the Wax Lake Outlet and Lower Atchafalya River and closure of Bayou Shaffer. Training works will simulate the formation of natural levees along about 15 miles of existing channel length by placing dredged material to a height sufficient to confine average peak flows, in an irregular series of low mounds about 1 vertical on 40 horizontal, with gaps; and

(6) Construction of freshwater distribution structures for the Henderson Lake and Alabama Bayou areas in the lower floodway. The Courtableau structure site will be relocated to a site in the vicinity of Bayou Graw near river mile 45.0 on the West Atchafalaya River levee, and the Sherbourne structure will be located in the east river levee at approximate river mile 43.0.

c. I will consider approval, under existing authorization, of construction of further extension of the East Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee beyond the Avoca Island Cutoff channel and/or other structural and nonstructural measures, after completion of further studies of the engineering and biological parameters affecting the complex, dynamic and delicate ecosystem of the Atchafalaya Bay-Terrebonne Marsh backwater complex.

3. The reporting officer recommended improvements in the Basin for flood control and environmental preservation that require Congressional authorization. The Mississippi River Commission was unable to reach a majority view on the implementation of these features. After careful consideration of all issues, I conclude that the unauthorized features of the plan recommended by the reporting officer are in the public interest, are justifiable on the basis of combined economic and beneficial environmental effects, are responsive to the Congressional resolutions which requested a "... comprehensive plan for the management and preservation of the water and related land resources of the Atchafalaya River Basin...", and are, therefore, proper added increments of the Mississippi River and Tributaries Project. Therefore, I recommend that the Atchafalaya Basin Feature of the MR&T project, authorized by the Flood Control Act, approved 15 May 1928, as amended, be further modified and expanded to provide improvements as follows, with such modifications, substitutions, additions, or deletions as in the discretion of the Chief of Engineers may be advisable in the interest of flood control and environmental improvements.

a. Acquisition of additional real estate interest, excluding minerals, in the Lower Atchafalaya Basin Floodway for:

(1) Flood Control Purposes - Flowage easements on approximately 59,000 acres and developmental control easements on approximately 367,000 acres, excluding developed ridges; ? with which

(2) Environmental Protection Purposes - In addition to developmental control rights, environmental protection rights will be included in a comprehensive multipurpose easement on the same 367,000 acres, excluding developed ridges;

(3) Recreation Development Purposes - Fee simple title, excluding minerals, on 1,500 acres; and

(4) Public Access - Participation with the State of Louisiana in the fee title purchase, excluding minerals, of approximately 50,000 acres of lands identified by the State as being available from "willing sellers". Federal cost participation will be limited to $32,000,000.00. (The State will provide additional public access within the lower floodway on 150,000 acres of existing State-owned lands and on more than 30,000 acres of lands donated to the State by the Dow Chemical Company.).

b. Construction of recreation facilities to provide three destination-type campgrounds, seven primitive campgrounds, boat-launching ramps, and other facilities complementary to outdoor recreational activities.

28 February 1983

c. Construction initially of two "pilot" Management Units, with implementation of future units to be at the discretion of the Chief of Engineers after evaluation of the operational success of the pilot units.

d. Construction of miscellaneous canal closures and water circulation improvements in the lower floodway.

4. The estimated cost of those features of the plan for which authorization exists is $816,980,000. This does not include $58,800,000 for the 14,000-foot interim extension of Avoca Island Levee recommended by the Mississippi River Commission, but which requires further study before approval and implementation. The total cost of features of the plan which require Congressional authorization is estimated to be $250,240,000 (all costs in October 1982 prices). The flood control features of the plan are integral, inseparable features of the authorized comprehensive MR&T project. The environmental features also provide many intangible benefits such as preservation of forest areas, lakes, swamps, and wetlands while the recreation features provide for public access and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Atchafalaya basin. Separable benefit cost analyses are not computed for inseparable features of the MR&T project. The benefit-cost ratio for this comprehensive project is 16.7 to 1.

5. The plan described in this report is a balanced approach to the water resource problems encountered in the Atchafalaya Basin area. The plan provides for the safe passage of the project design flood in an environmentally acceptable manner. The report is generally in accordance with all applicable laws and guidelines.

6. I recommend project features described in paragraph 3 above for authorization and implementation subject to cost sharing and financing arrangements which are satisfactory to the President and Congress.

J. K. Bratton
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
Chief of Engineers

Revised 7/30/01

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
AMONGST
THE CAPTAIN OF THE PORT NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
U. S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
LOUISIANA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
AND
IBERVILLE PARISH OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
CONCERNING
THE BAYOU SORREL AND BAYOU PIGEON WATERWAYS

I. PURPOSE

The Captain of the Port New Orleans, Louisiana, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness, and the Iberville Parish Office of Emergency Preparedness have agreed to coordinate their efforts to minimize the impacts associated with high water and marine traffic along the Bayou Sorrel and Bayou Pigeon Waterways. This agreement is entered into for the purposes of forming an agreed basis for action to minimize the effect on residences of marine transportation activities during flooding of the waterways, and for maintaining navigation safety and control of marine traffic along these two aforementioned waterways.

II. AFFECTED AREA

The area affected is from Mile 30 (two miles below the Bayou Pigeon Bridge) on the Port Allen Alternate Route to Mile 45 on the Port Allen Alternate Route.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE U. S. COAST GUARD

The U. S. Coast Guard will manage commercial marine traffic at high water upon request of the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness as follows:

1. Issue a Marine Information Broadcast when the Bayou Sorrel Locks north gauge on the protected side (hereafter called "the gauge") reads 5.5 feet, on the rise (when the gauge continues in an upward direction).

2. Establish by a Marine Information Broadcast a no wake zone (no discernible wake or wake of not more than one inch) when the gauge reads 6.0 feet, on the rise.

3. Issue a Marine Information Broadcast advising traffic will be limited to one way only in Bayou Sorrel and closing the Bayou Pigeon Waterway to all traffic when the gauge reads 6.5 feet, on the rise.

4. Effect reopening to two way traffic on the Bayou Sorrel and Bayou Pigeon Waterways when the gauge reads 6.5 feet, on the fall.

5. At the commencement of the no wake zone when the gauge reads 6.0 feet on the rise, and until the gauge reads 6.0 feet on the fall and the no wake zone is rescinded, the overall dimensions of any barges towed will not exceed 1080 feet (as a composite unit including tug) by 54 feet (single wide only).

Exhibit 2

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE U. S. ARMY CORP OF ENGINEERS

1. Maintain mooring facilities in the vicinity of the Bayou Sorrel Locks.

2. Effect closure of the Bayou Sorrel Locks when the gauge reads 7.3 feet.

3. Effect reopening of the Bayou Sorrel Locks when the gauge reads 6.9 feet, on the predicted continuous fall.

4. Coordinate priority exceptions with the U. S. Coast Guard and Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LOUISIANA OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

1. Will coordinate the process of placing restrictions on use of the waterway when the gauge reads 5.5 feet, on the rise, and notifying the other signatory agencies.

2. Coordinate with Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries to enforce no wake restrictions on all vessels in the affected area.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE IBERVILLE PARISH OFFICE OF EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

1. Contact the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness when the gauge reads 5.5 feet on the rise to initiate action as per terms of this agreement.

2. Will establish and request enforcement of the no wake zone.

3. Initiate, with the Sheriff's Department and Louisiana Wildlife & Fisheries, the enforcement of no wake restrictions on all vessels in the affected area.

VII. COMMUNICATING EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

Each party agrees to be in communication regarding the existing conditions affecting the aforementioned waterway, providing on site representatives as deemed necessary and to consult as to further actions as may be advisable as a result of extenuating circumstances in addition to the responses previously indicated based upon specific gauge readings.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION

This agreement becomes effective immediately upon signing by all parties. It will remain in effect unless terminated by any signatory party, in which case written notice must be provided to all signatory parties, and termination will occur thirty days thereafter said notice. Any modifications to this agreement must be provided in writing and agreed upon by all signatory parties.

In addition, the parties signatory to this agreement agree that there may be circumstances, in extremis, when there is a need to take action to control traffic or close the locks before the waterway gauge at the Bayou Sorrel Locks reaches any of the action levels referenced elsewhere

within this agreement.

This agreement is subject to review, by all signatory parties, on an annual basis.

Accepted and Agreed:

State of Louisiana
Office of Emergency Preparedness

By:
Col. Michael L. Brown
Title: Asst. Director

Date: 10/5/01

Iberville Parish Council
Office of Emergency Preparedness

By:
Stanley H. "Jackie" Jackson
Title: Director

Date: 9/28/01

United States
Army Corps of Engineers

By:
Col. Thomas J. Julian
Title: District Engineer

Date: 10/12/01

United States Coast Guard
Captain of the Port
New Orleans, Louisiana

By:
Stephen W. Rochon
Title: Captain of the Port New Orleans

Date:

PB. 12/12/01

RECEIVED 11-13-00

KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

State of Louisiana
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE, RECREATION & TOURISM
OFFICE OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF ARCHAEOLOGY

PHILLIP J. JONES
SECRETARY

GERRI HOBDY
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

November 8, 2000

Mr. David F. Carney
Chief, Environmental Planning
and Compliance Branch
Department of the Army
New Orleans District, Corps of Engineers
P.O. Box 60267
New Orleans, LA 70160-0267

Re: Draft Phase II CRM Report (22-2331)
Evaluation of the National Register Eligibility of the Bayou Boeuf, Bayou Sorrel, and Berwick Locks and the Calumet and Charenton Floodgates in the Atchafalaya Basin, Louisiana
R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc.

Dear Mr. Carney:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter dated August 4, 2000, transmitting two copies of the referenced report. We have completed our review of the document and have the following comments to offer.

Overall, we found the report to be thorough and well-written. We concur with the contractor's assessment that the Bayou Sorrel and Berwick locks, and the Calumet and Charenton floodgates are eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) under Criteria A and C. We also agree that Bayou Boeuf Lock lacks sufficient integrity for consideration for listing on the NRHP.

Please find enclosed a copy of technical comments made pertaining to the submitted report. Once these comments have been addressed, please transmit two copies of the final report to this office for our files. If we may be of further assistance, please contact Ms. Alyssa Loney in the Division of Archaeology at (225) 342-8170.

Exhibit 3

Sincerely,

Gerri Hobdy

Gerri Hobdy
State Historic Preservation Officer

GH:ALL:all

Enclosures: as stated

cc: R Christopher Goodwin and Associates, Inc.
Attn: Kathryn M. Kuranda
241 East Fourth Street, Suite 100
Frederick, MD 21701

CECW-PC(CELMV-ET-P 27 Mar 96) (1105-2-10c) 3rd End Mr. Kennedy/202-761-8529
SUBJECT: Reducing the Time and Cost for Planning Studies

HQUSACE (CECW-ZA). WASH, DC 20314-1000 08 AUG 1996

FOR Commander, Lower Mississippi Valley Division, Vicksburg, MS 39181-0080

1. We have reconsidered your proposals regarding the Intracoastal Waterway Locks study and the revised proposal for the Wolf River, Memphis, Tennessee study. A follow-up briefing by Division and District plan formulation and economics staff cleared away many of our concerns and resulted in agreement on all of the others.

2. Intracoastal Waterway Locks - We concur subject to:

a. Economic Systems Analysis - While we, too, expect that the analysis will find that a 1200-foot by 110-foot lock is the optimal replacement size, you must demonstrate it with an analysis. The analysis need not and should not be any more complicated, costly or time-consuming than is absolutely necessary to make a convincing case. You may take 1200-foot length as a given since the adjacent locks are all of that length. The width, however, is not standard in the system of locks. The optimal width could be 56-, 84- or 110-foot. You already have costed 56 and 110-foot widths. Instead of costing intermediate sizes, you may be able to eliminate the need by using a reasoned, cost estimating process to determine whether intermediate sizes hold promise for being the National Economic Development (NED) plan. For example, if you assume a straight line cost relationship between those two knowns and draw the cost of an 84-foot wide lock from that line and find that the net benefits are greater for the 110-foot wide lock, you will have a convincing basis for identifying the 110-foot width as the NED plan.

b. Reliability Analysis - A reliability analysis is required but the form of the reliability analysis should be streamlined. The report will present the age and condition of all of the other locks in the system.

3. Wolf River - We concur in your modified proposal.

Stanley G. Genega

11 Encls
w/d all Encls

STANLEY G. GENEGA
Major General, USA
Director of Civil Works

Exhibit 4

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POST/SOUTH
Plaquemine, LA
Weekly (Thur)
Circ. 6,180
February 6, 2003

Corps calls meeting on $80 million lock replacement at Sorrel

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers will discuss its $80 million proposal to relocate the Bayou Sorrel Lock at a public meeting at 6:30 p.m. next Thursday (February 13) at the Courthouse.

Better navigation and flood control are the goals of the huge project.

The public meeting will give residents the chance to comment on the alternatives the Corps has investigated.

A new, larger lock is being proposed because vessels are experiencing delays of 2.4 to 4.1 hours per towboat-barge combination, the Corps said.

While the present lock measures 799 by 56 feet, the dimensions of the new one would be 1,200 by 75 feet. The depth would remain at 15 feet.

The Corps of Engineers plans to buy an additional 102 acres of land to accommodate construction. At present, the Corps holds channel and dredged-material placement easements on the land.

The Corps expects to complete a study of the project by June. The engineering and design work for the project are scheduled for completion in 2005.

Constuction would take about three years, weather and funding permitting. Vessels would continue to use the existing lock while the new one is built "in the dry."

Keeping the alternate route open would allow towboats and barges to avoid a 234-mile detour through the New Orleans area when operating between Baton Rouge and Morgan City. It would also make it possible to avoid creating vessel-traffic jams at the Corps' navigation locks on the West Bank near New Orleans.

The Bayou Sorrel lock is located on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, a 64-mile-long shortcut from the Mississippi River from Port Allen to Morgan City.

Increased flood protection is proposed because the Atchafalaya Basin levee is eight feet higher than the gates of the Bayou Sorrel lock.

Alternatives that the Corps has considered include flood-control-only plans that could reduce flooding, but not reduce traffic delays, the Corps said. The Corps looked at an independent float-in flood gate located on the floodway (Atchafalaya Basin) side of the lock and a new lock with the same dimensions as the existing one.

The Corps' environmental impact statement and draft feasibility study are to be available on the web at www.mvn.usac.army.mil/proj/BayouSorrel/. Paper copies also are available.

Questions on the environmental impact statement

See LOCK REPLACEMENT, Page 2-A

Lock replacement

Continued from Page 1

can be addressed to biologist Richard Boe at U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVN-PM-RP, P.O. 60267, New Orleans, LA 70160-0267, by telephone at (504)862-1505, or by e-mail at richard.e.boe@mvn02.usace.army.mil.

Questions on the feasibility study can be directed to Project Manager Darrel Broussard at same address as Boe, by telephone at (504) 862-2591 or by e-mail at darrel.m.Broussard@mvn02.usace.army.mil.

The public meeting will be held the in Iberville Parish Council chambers on

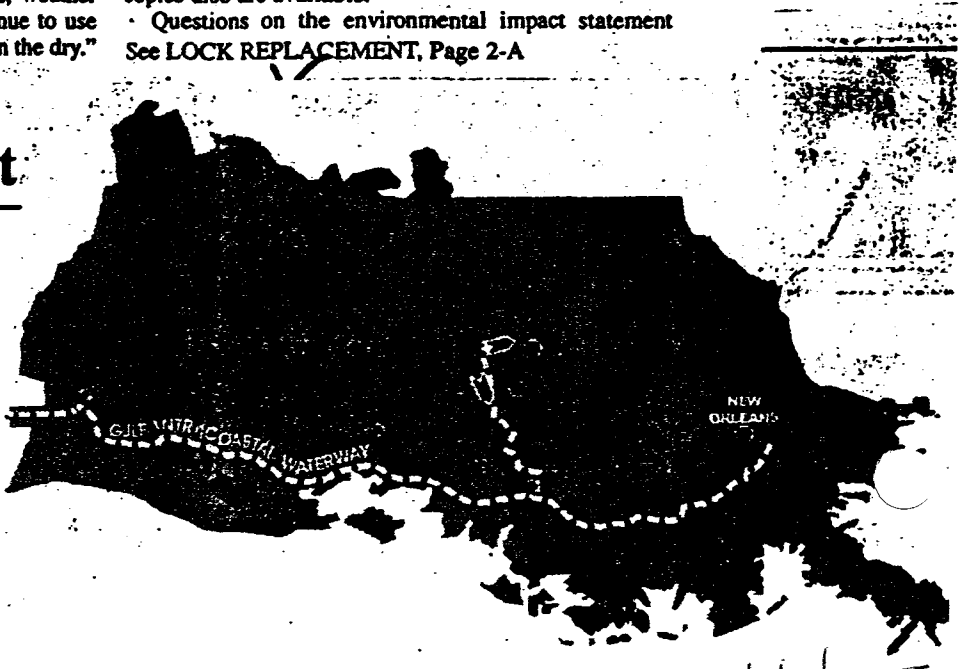

Exhibit 5

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DAILY REVIEW
Morgan City, LA
Daily (ex.Sat/Sun)
Circ. 6,032
February 6, 2003

Bayou Sorrel Lock upgrade public hearing in Plaquemine

Better flood control and navigation are the goals of an $80 million proposal to replace the Bayou Sorrel Lock between Baton Rouge and Morgan City, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Wednesday.

A public meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 13, at 6:30 p.m., in the Iberville Parish Council chambers, 58050 Meriam Street in Plaquemine.

Citizens are asked to comment on the alternatives that have been investigated in the draft feasibility study report and draft environmental impact statement.

The Bayou Sorrel Lock is located on a 64-mile-long shortcut from the Mississippi River to Morgan City that avoids a long, indirect trip through New Orleans.

The shortcut is the Morgan City to Port Allen (Baton Rouge) Alternate Route of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

The Bayou Sorrel Lock is located at the juncture of the Alternate Route and the East Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee, at the town of Bayou Sorrel, which lies on the protected (east) side of the levee.

Increased flood protection is proposed because the Atchafalaya Basin levee is 8 feet higher than the gates of the lock. The gates and lock constitute continuation of the levee across the waterway. This flood-control system cannot be modified to pass a project flood safely.

A new, larger lock is proposed because vessels are experiencing delays of about 2¼ to 4 hours per towboat-barge combination. The new lock's dimensions would be 1,200-feet-long by 75-feet-wide.

The present lock measures 799-by-56 feet. Depth would remain 15 feet.

The Corps of Engineers would buy an additional 102 acres of land to accommodate construction. At present, the Corps holds channel and dredged-material placement easements on this land.

It is expected that the study will be completed by June. Engineering and design would be completed in 2005. Then, construction would take about three years, weather and funding permitting. Vessels would continue to use the existing lock while the new one is built in the dry.

Keeping the Alternate Route open would allow towboats and barges to avoid a 234-mile detour through the New Orleans area when operating between Baton Rouge and Morgan City. This would also make it possible to avoid creating vessel-traffic jams at the Corps' navigation locks on the West Bank near New Orleans.

Alternatives considered

Flood-control-only plans would safely pass the project flood in the Atchafalaya Basin, but not reduce navigation delays. The flood-control only alternatives include:

(Continued on Page 14)

Exhibit 6

Bayou Sorrel Lock

(Continued from Page 1)

—An independent float-in flood gate, located on the floodway (Atchafalaya Basin) side of the lock.

—A new lock with the same dimensions as the existing lock.

Flood control and navigation plans would safely pass the project flood and reduce delays to navigation.

Alternatives for a new lock include 75 by 1,200 feet and 110 by 1,200 feet.

See the draft environmental impact statement and draft feasibility study on the Web at:

http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/prj/BayouSorrel/

Paper copies are also available.

Questions

Environmental Impact Statement: Address questions to Biologist Richard Boe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVN-PM-RP, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, La. 70160-0267.

Contact: (504) 862-1505 or richard.e.boe@mvn02.usace.army.mil

Feasibility Study: Address questions to Project Manager Darrel Broussard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVN-PM-W, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, La. 70160-0267.Contact: (504) 862-2591 or darrel.m.Broussard@mvn02.usace.army.mil.

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BANNER-TRIBUNE
Franklin, LA
Daily (ex.Sat/Sun)
(Dly 3,476)
February 6, 2003

Hearing called on Sorrel lock

Better flood control and navigation are the goals of an $80 million proposal to replace the Bayou Sorrel Lock between Baton Rouge and Morgan City, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Wednesday.

A public meeting will be held Thursday, Feb. 13, at 6:30 p.m., in the Ibervillle Parish Council chambers, 58050 Meriam Street in Plaquemine.

Citizens are asked to comment on the alternatives that have been investigated in the draft feasibility study report and draft environmental impact statement.

The Bayou Sorrel Lock is located on a 64-mile-long shortcut from the Mississippi River to Morgan City that avoids a long, indirect trip through New Orleans.

The shortcut is the Morgan City to Port Allen (Baton Rouge) Alternate Route of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

The Bayou Sorrel Lock is located at the juncture of the Alternate Route and the East Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee, at the town of Bayou Sorrel, which lies on the protected (east) side of the levee.

Increased flood protection is proposed because the Atchafalaya Basin levee is 8 feet higher than the gates of the lock. The gates and lock constitute continuation of the levee across the waterway. This flood-control system cannot be modified to pass a project flood safely.

A new, larger lock is proposed because vessels are experiencing delays of about 2¼ to 4 hours per towboat-barge combination. The new lock's dimensions would be 1,200-feet-long by 75-feet-wide.

The present lock measures 799-by-56 feet. Depth would remain 15 feet.

The Corps of Engineers would buy an additional 102 acres of land to accommodate construction. At present, the Corps holds channel and dredged-material placement easements on this land.

It is expected that the study will be completed by June. Engineering and design would be completed in 2005. Then, construction would take about three years, weather and funding permitting. Vessels would continue to use the existing lock while the new one is built in the dry.

Keeping the Alternate Route open would allow towboats and barges to avoid a 234-mile detour through the New Orleans area when operating between Baton Rouge and Morgan City. This would also make it possible to avoid creating vessel-traffic jams at the Corps' navigation locks on the West Bank near New Orleans.

Alternatives considered

Flood-control-only plans would safely pass the project flood in the Atchafalaya Basin, but not reduce navigation delays. The flood-control only alternatives include:

—An independent float-in flood gate, located on the floodway (Atchafalaya Basin) side of the lock.

—A new lock with the same dimensions as the existing lock.

Flood control and navigation plans would safely pass the project flood and reduce delays to navigation.

Alternatives for a new lock include 75 by 1,200 feet and 110 by 1,200 feet.

See the draft environmental impact statement and draft feasibility study on the Web at:

http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/prj/BayouSorrel/

Paper copies are also available.

Questions

Environmental Impact Statement: Address questions to Biologist Richard Boe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVN-PM-RP, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, La. 70160-0267.

Contact: (504) 862-1505 or richard.e.boe@mvn02.usace.army.mil

Feasibility Study: Address questions to Project Manager Darrel Broussard, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CEMVN-PM-W, P.O. Box 60267, New Orleans, La. 70160-0267.

Contact: (504) 862-2591 or darrel.m.Broussard@mvn02.usace.army.mil.

Exhibit 7

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ADVOCATE

Baton Rouge, LA

Daily & Sunday
(Dly 101,736; Sun 134,953)

February 7, 2003

Meeting set on plan to improve flood control, navigation at lock

By EMILY KERN
Westside bureau

BAYOU SORREL — An $80 million proposal to replace the Bayou Sorrel Lock between Baton Rouge and Morgan City is aimed at improving flood control and navigation, the U.S. Corps of Engineers said.

A public meeting to discuss the proposal is scheduled at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the Iberville Parish Council chambers, 58050 Meriam St.

The Bayou Sorrel Lock is on a 64-mile shortcut from the Mississippi River to Morgan City that avoids a long, indirect trip through New Orleans, corps officials said.

Project manager Darrel Broussard said the original lock was constructed as part of the Mississippi River and Tributaries flood-control project.

The corps anticipates flooding levels of 31.7 feet in a worst-case scenario, Broussard said, and the lock sits at 24 feet.

All of the surrounding levees have been raised, and the Bayou Sorrel Lock is the last part of project improvements in that area of the state, Broussard said.

One alternative would be to build an independent floodgate in front of the lock, Broussard said.

The lock is heavily used for barge traffic, he said. The industry could lose $500,000 per day if the lock had to close, Broussard said.

And that alternative would not alleviate the navigation problems.

The second aim of the project, improving navigation, could be accomplished by building a new, larger lock.

The lock is one of the smallest on the channel, Broussard said.

The new lock's dimensions would be 1,200 feet long by 75 feet wide and would reduce the amount of time vessels spend waiting. The present lock measures 799 by 56 feet, and barge tows have to spend time breaking up, Broussard said.

The larger capacity would allow towboats pushing barges to go straight through, and instead of a 4½-hour wait, it could be reduced to only a half hour, Broussard said.

Barges would not spend as much time tied up to the bank, which causes erosion problems and is something the parish administration and residents want the corps to address, he said.

Broussard said the cost of building the project would be shared between the corps and boat operators.

Members of the inland waterway user group pay into a trust fund each time they buy diesel fuel, Broussard said. A certain percentage of the money goes into the trust fund for upkeep of the channels.

The total cost of the project is estimated at $79.3 million, Broussard said. The flood-control portion is estimated at $27.2 million and would be funded entirely by the federal government, he said.

The $52.1 million remaining would be split evenly between the federal government and trust fund money, he said.

Broussard said he visited the site with Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso Jr. to look at the erosion problems.

Incorporating a mooring facility would allow vessels to tie up to it instead of the bank, he said. Another alternative is placing rock protection in the channel to protect the land.

Broussard said officials would price the two alternatives and find the one that most benefits taxpayers.

Exhibit 8

ATERWAYS JOURNAL Weekly
48 Since 1887 February 24, 2003

Board Slams Bush Budget Proposal

J. SALZANO
Correspondent

—The Inland Water-WUB) has urged the Congress to support rity inland navigation and studies at their vels, with funding, to practicable, at the full pability of the U.S. eers.

ve summary of the report presented by Daniel P. Mecklen-ident and chief legal n Barge Company, e board said it was ed in and opposed to cal year 2004 budget r the first time use ust Fund monies to eration and mainte-d waterways (on top

of paying half the costs of project construction)."

The administration's budget proposal, the board reported, "breaks the federal government's carefully balanced compact with the users as envisioned in the Water Resources Development Act of 1986 (WRDA 86), and would greatly exacerbate the problem caused by inadequate appropriations for new construction and major rehabilitation over the last decade."

Mecklenborg said that the priority projects in the board's report that are already under construction will require $2.8 billion to complete, of which $1.4 billion will have to be funded by the Trust Fund. The current surplus of $411 million, plus the next six years of user fees, are already committed to projects already under construction.

"The administration's proposal would suck the Trust Fund dry within three years and lead almost certainly to a dramatic increase in taxes for the users of the inland waterways," the board reported. "The damage to our nation's transportation system would be profound and lasting. We urge the Congress to soundly reject this unfortunate and unwise proposal."

Stressing that the board is "unalterably opposed" to using Trust Fund money for operations and maintenance, Mecklenborg listed six construction projects as the board's recommendations for the next fiscal year: Olmsted Locks and Dam on the Ohio River; Inner Harbor Navigation (Industrial) Canal Lock on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway; McAlpine Locks and Dam on the Ohio River; Monongahela River Locks

—SEE WASHINGTON PAGE 8

Corps Anticipates Shorter Season On Missouri River

The Corps of Engineers anticipates the 2003 navigation season on the Missouri River will be shortened by five days in the fall, based on abnormally low mountain snowpack and continuing drought conditions on the plains.

Runoff above Sioux City, Iowa, totaled 486,000 acre feet, only 66 percent of normal, said Larry Cieslik, chief of the Corps' Missouri River Basin Water Management Division in Omaha, Neb.

Normally 60 percent of the peak snow in the mountains is accumulated by early February, he said.

"As of February 1, the mountain snowpack was 73 percent of normal in the reach above Fort Peck and 80 percent in the reach from Fort Peck to Garrison, essentially the Yellowstone River basin," he said. "With below normal mountain snow and normal precipitation the rest of the year, we are forecasting annual runoff to be 19.2 million acre feet (maf.)."

In an average year, runoff is 25.2 maf.

Support for the 2003 navigation season will begin April 1 at the mouth near St. Louis, but river flows will be at minimum service levels. And as of now, the Corps expects to have to take five days off of the end of the navigation season. A final determination of the length of the shortening will be made after the water-in-storage check on July 1.

System storage ended January at 42.3 maf., down 400,000 acre-feet during the month. Last January it was 48.7 maf.

"System storage is currently around 13 maf. below the average of 57.3 maf.," said Cieslik.

Releases from Gavins Point averaged 13,700 cubic feet per second (cfs.) in January. They ranged from 13,000–15,000 cfs. based on weather

—SEE MISSOURI PAGE 13

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Public Speaks Out On Bayou Sorrel Project

BY BILL EVANS

A proposed new 1,200- by 75-foot lock to replace the present Bayou Sorrel Lock on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Port Allen Alternate Route not surprisingly drew praise from marine interests while area residents expressed concerns over bank erosion when the New Orleans Engineer District sought input via a public meeting in Plaquemine, La., recently.

A new 1,200- by 75-foot concrete lock "is the right approach and we would urge the Corps to move to construction without delay," testified Ken Wells, American Waterways Operators Southern Region vice president, in the meeting at the Iberville Parish Council chamber, February 13.

Raymond Butler, executive director of the Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association, said in a written statement filed with the Corps GICA "fully supports the expeditious replacement of the Bayou Sorrel Lock structure" and endorses the 1,200- by 75-foot lock concept.

A number of area residents called on the Corps to act to protect their property from erosion, whatever is done with the lock replacement.

GICA "is intimately familiar with most issues concerning waterway maintenance along the length of the (Gulf Intracoastal) waterway and we see bank erosion as a major issue for future preservation of the waterway," said Butler in his written testimony. "There are major problems at various locations from Texas throughout Louisiana.

"We sympathize with the residents of Iberville Parish and recognize their problem with bank erosion," said Butler. "The loss of bank property causes increased shoaling of the waterway, reducing channel depths and loss of channel definition for our operators.

"It is in the spirit of attempting to reduce this very critical problem that we strongly urge the Corps to consider placing bank

—SEE SORREL PAGE 5

rd Marine Safety Offices— 'At The Helm Of Marine Safety'

CHAD SAYLOR
District Public Affairs

ou don't have to come back." in-cheek Marine Safety Office s, of course, until September 11, Guard marine safety crews are r lunch. For U.S. Coast Guards-daily pace of operations, has From added patrols, to changes to a move into a new depart-

crew of four officers and petty officers have completed a marine safety boarding and are briefing the vessel's skipper, Capt. Ajai Tewari. LeCain, who speaks with a refined surfer's drawl, explains to Tewari that his vessel has just undergone a Certificate of Compliance boarding, which examines steering systems, navigation systems, and a host of other checkpoints. LeCain fills Tewari in on his vessel's deficiencies and exchanges the appropriate paperwork with the captain.

Merchant ships such as the oil tanker are still part of

months with 24 major deficiencies, said LeCain.

As LeCain and his crew scale the vessel's Jacob's ladder onto the decaying vessel, the inspectors wonder aloud if they'll even make it aboard. During the boarding, LeCain visits with the ship's master, who tries his best to convey in broken English that his vessel complies with the Coast Guard's safety requirements.

"That thing can *barely* put water out," exclaims Petty Officer 3rd Class Bryan Mitchell, a marine science tech-

Exhibit 9

Sorrel

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3)

protection at appropriate locations within the confines of this project," he said. "We also urge the Corps to design this protection in such a manner so as not to puncture barge hull structures if contacted by vessels.

"A common cause of bank erosion is the contact of barges and boats with non-protected bank surfaces," said Butler. "This generally occurs at locations where barge traffic must stop and wait for lock turn, traffic or weather.

"Bayou Sorrel is just such a location," he said. "We urge the Corps to install (an) adequate number of barge mooring cells to allow for 'remaking' of tows that must be broken down for locking and for mooring of tows that must wait their lock turn. These structures are critical to protecting bank surfaces and barge hull structures."

Butler said GICA sees no problems with the Corps' proposed channel alignments for the lock replacement project "and applaud the Corps for considering the effects of current on tows in moving the confluence of intersecting waterways away from the immediate lock approach area.

"We stand ready to assist the Corps in supplying input to the final design of this structure," said Butler.

Flood control improvements and a lock replacement plan recommended in the Corps' Bayou Sorrel Lock Feasibility Study "is well designed" and "necessary for the safety of area residents and for the future efficiency of the waterway," Wells testified during the meeting.

Floodgate Proposal

Wells questioned a proposed floodgate, studied as a possible alternative to new lock construction. "The process used by the Corps to develop the least-cost alternative floodgate option is of some concern," he said. "Although the floodgate is not the recommended option, it has been used to help allocate costs for the preferred alternative lock structure. As a result, it is an integral part of the study and should be held to the same scrutiny as the recommended lock."

Wells questioned the Corps' floodgate cost estimates as "too low" and said the estimates "do not reflect the potential negative impact the floodgate would have on waterborne commerce and on the local community."

The floodgate alternative would include construction of a float-in floodgate to be located on the Atchafalaya Basin side of the existing 799- by 56-foot Bayou Sorrel Lock. The structure would be designed to safely pass a project flood in the Basin, but would not reduce navigation delays, Corps officials said.

Wells questioned the proposal to build the floodgate structure offsite, then float it into place with minimal delays to industry. "This has never been done before and exists as a hypothetical engineering design," he said. "It is doubtful that it could be accomplished within the timeline and at the cost used in the study. It is likely that were this option chosen, costs would be higher and delays more significant."

Waiting time for tows during construction of such a floodgate could result in additional erosion damage to lands around the lock, said Wells. "The study should either reflect the cost of this property damage or the cost of constructing enough mooring buoys above and below the structure to allow tows to wait for the lock without causing property damage," he said.

Wells said impacts of high water on the construction schedule for a floodgate and the resultant cost to waterborne commerce should be considered, as should the impacts of building a floodgate at the 54-foot width considered in the study.

"Once these true costs of the floodgate options have been factored into the study, we believe it will change the cost allocation for the preferred alternative," he said.

Details of the Corps' draft environmental impact statement and draft feasibility study for the Bayou Sorrel project can be found on the New Orleans Engineer District Web site: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/prj/BayouSorrel.

Darrel Broussard in the New Orleans District is project manager, phone 504, 862-2591.

The Advocate News

Friday, February 14, 2003

Coming Feb. 26: The Advocate, WBRZ Web sites become BRtoday.com

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Corps told to solve bayou erosion

By EMILY KERN
ekern@theadvocate.com
Westside bureau

PLAQUEMINE -- Bayou Sorrel residents overwhelmingly told U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials they wanted a solution to erosion problems in exchange for their support of an $80 million proposal to replace the Bayou Sorrel Lock.

The proposal calls for new lock dimensions of 1,200 feet long by 75 feet wide.

The larger lock would allow towboats pushing barges to go straight through, instead of having the break up, and reduce waiting time from four and a half hours to only a half-hour, corps officials said.

The cost of the project would be shared between the corps and boat operators.

Kari Desselle said she watches her land wash away day after day. Barges spend time tied up to the bank, which causes erosion problems, and is something residents and the parish administration want the corps to address.

Over 25 years, Desselle said, she has lost 35 feet of property. She said she spent $2,000 having the land built back up only to watch it disappear.

"If you send more boat traffic through there, I'm not going to have a house anymore," Desselle said.

Desselle said she wanted to know what she could do to receive assistance.

Corps officials said their purpose at the meeting was to collect information from the public. They said they would provide answers at a later date.

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Exhibit 10

Debbi Jones said her mobile home is one of five structures that will have to be moved to accommodate the new lock.

Jones said she wanted assurance that her home could be moved without being damaged and she wanted the government to pay for it.

"It's an old mobile home. I put too much in it to fix it up and make it decent," Jones said.

Darl Ashley said he felt the corps should have considered moving the lock north.

"We're going to be a bunch of tourists waiting on the bridge for the tows to go by," Ashley said.

Randall Thigpen of Westgate Inc. said he favored the project and felt that the new lock should be even wider. Corps officials said they considered building the lock 110 feet wide.

Thigpen said the corps should consider the ability to attract new projects to the area when making the final plans.

Parish Councilman Kenneth Ourso Jr. said he supported the project as long as it provided for both lining the channel with limestone and mooring stations for tows waiting to go through.

"Otherwise, I'd be adamantly opposed to it," Ourso said.

Members of the public have 30 days to submit written comments to the corps concerning the project.

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Whitehurst speaks out about proposed locks

by Linda Cooke

On Feb. 14, the Baton Rouge Advocate ran an article about a meeting held the previous week in the Iberville Parish Council chambers during which local residents expressed their feelings about the proposed Bayou Sorrel lock improvement.

At the first meeting, Army Corps officials said the proposed lock could be 75 feet by 1200 feet or 110 by 1200 rather than the present 56 by 799 foot structure which would cut down waiting time for boats passing through the locks. A mooring facility was also being considered or some type of rock protection for the river banks which are now being badly eroded by boat traffic.

Since this second meeting, a local Pierre Part resident and long time boat pilot, Captain David Whitehurst, has written to the project manager of the USACE expressing his personal opinion of this proposal based on his many years of navigating the Morgan City/Port Allen waterway route which is a 234 mile shortcut for boats traveling between Baton Rouge and Morgan City.

Captain Whitehurst says the problem is not how to improve the Sorrel locks, although that could help the traffic situation, but the size of the boats and tows using the locks. The lock was built in the first place to accommodate single wide tows and boats of much smaller sizes than the 3000 h.p. ones now using this route. A 35 to 56 foot wide tow being steered into a 75 foot wide lock is manageable. Steering a double wide tow of 70 foot by 200 foot, a six-pack as it is called, into a 75 foot wide lock chamber, is like threading a needle.

Plus, says Capt. Whitehurst, the bigger boats with more powerful engines combined with boxed end barges (rather than shaped) make maneuvering much more difficult which in turn creates greater suction on the canal banks causing serious erosion to property.

Capt. David says part of the road beyond Jack Miller's landing has caved in because of this erosion and residents can no longer use the entire road. One Sorrel resident, Kari Dosselle, said at the Feb. 13 meeting that she has lost 35 feet of her property due to erosion from the boat traffic.

According to the Captain, large tow boats routinely have what is called a Kort Knozzle, a propeller device that gives them more power but which requires deeper water and causes serious erosion to the river banks. The longer tows have to practically touch the banks to maneuver into the lock.

Captain Whitehurst also says it is extremely dangerous for red flag tows-those carrying petroleum or chemicals—to be traveling on this MC/PA route. There is just too much chance for accidents.

"The Army Corps and the Coast Guard should set and enforce safety standards on our inland waterways," said Captain Whitehurst. "Right now it seems to be like a highway intersection where people have to be killed before something is done."

Basically the Captain feels that boats and tows on this shortcut using the Bayou Sorrel locks, should never be more than 54 feet wide nor longer than 900 feet. If the new lock is wide enough then assist boats won't be needed to break up tows, tie them up, move them back into place, all the backing and churning which now eats away the banks.

Captain David Whitehurst has personal experience traversing Bayou Sorrel locks.

"A new locking system is long overdue," said Capt. Whitehurst, "but it needs to be wide enough for us to use with ease and safety. Seventy five feet isn't enough. Tows should be shorter, tugs less powerful, no more double wide red flag tows, and the Coast Guard should stick by the standards they set."

(Captain David Whitehurst is a member of the Gulf Coast Mariners Association and on the board of directors of that organization.)

Exhibit 11